

XXVI.—Three new African Mice of the Genus *Dendromus*.  
By OLDFIELD THOMAS.

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*Dendromus nyasæ*, sp. n.

Near *D. mesomelas*, but tail shorter.

General characters, including the presence of a claw on the fifth hind toe, as in *D. mesomelas*. Colour above about as in that species, though rather darker, this difference being more marked on the flanks, which are less fulvous and more tawny. Under surface more heavily mixed with slaty, the white ends to the hairs shorter, and only those on the chin white to the roots. A well-marked black dorsal stripe present. Tail decidedly shorter than in *mesomelas*, dark brown above, a little lighter below.

Skull about as in *mesomelas*.

Dimensions of the type (taken on skin):—

Head and body 80 mm.; tail (vertebræ *in situ*) 85; hind foot (wet) 20·5.

Skull: greatest length 22·5; condylo-incisive length 20·2; zygomatic breadth 11·6; nasals 8·3; breadth of brain-case 10; palatilar length 9·3; palatal foramina 4·9; upper molar series 3·5; length of  $m^1$  2·1.

*Hab.* Nyika Plateau, N. Nyasa. Alt. 6500'.

*Type.* Adult female. B.M. no. 97. 10. 1. 121. Original number 119. Collected June 1896 by Mr. A. Whyte, and presented by Sir H. H. Johnston.

This species is based on the two specimens of true *Dendromys* with greyish bellies which, as indicated in a previous paper, were mixed up in Mr. Wroughton's account of his *D. nyikæ*. That species, as identified by the type skin, is a *Poemys*, with a nail on the hind toe, although, misled by these specimens, Mr. Wroughton stated that it had a claw.

*D. nyasæ* differs from its nearest ally, *D. mesomelas*, by its markedly shorter tail and darker-coloured flanks and under surface. There does not seem to be any sufficient reason for distinguishing *D. ayresi*, Roberts, from *D. mesomelas*, any more than the same author's *D. longicaudatus* from *D. melanotis*, but neither reasons for distinction nor general characters are, in any of this author's descriptions, sufficiently clearly stated to make certainty possible. Topotypical specimens give, therefore, the only means of elucidating his names, and in the present instance the Museum contains examples supporting the identifications I now make.

*Dendromus insignis kivu*, subsp. n.

Like true *insignis*, but averaging smaller, and with rather shorter fur. Colour quite similar, though the dorsal line is not quite so heavy; under surface washed with buffy.

Skull ranging from 22.5 to 24 mm. in total length, that of true *insignis* always about 25 mm. Supraorbital edge more sharply squared and with a greater tendency to the formation of supraorbital ridges, which run forward to the level of the hinder end of the nasals. Molars rather variable in size,  $m^1$  in the type only 2.0 mm. in length, but in other specimens it may be 2.2 or 2.3 mm., as is usual in *insignis*.

Dimensions of type (measured in flesh):—

Head and body 75 mm.; tail 88; hind foot 18.5; ear 14.

Skull: greatest length 22.5; condylo-incisive length 19.6; zygomatic breadth 11; nasals 9; interorbital breadth 3.1; breadth of brain-case 10.3; palatilar length 9.2; palatal foramina 4.9; upper molar series 3.2; length of  $m^1$  2.0.

*Type.* Adult male. B.M. no. 11.12.3.117. Original number 2170. Collected 31st May, 1911, by Robin Kemp; presented by Oldfield Thomas.

*Hab.* Kivu Region. Type from Buhamba, alt. 2000 m.; other specimens from Mukanda and Burunga.

While true *insignis* is very constant in size of skull, this form, from further south near Lake Kivu, is curiously variable; but all the six specimens available are distinguishable by the characters above detailed.

I confess I fail to see sufficient reason for the distinction from *D. insignis* of the Mt. Gargues "*Dendromus mesomelas percivali*," Heller, our series from the Aberdares containing specimens agreeing both in colour and skull with the type of *insignis*, and others with the topotypes of *percivali* given us by Mr. Percival. The lumping of *insignis* with the southern *D. mesomelas* appears equally unfounded.

*Dendromus (Poemys) nigrifrons vulturinus*, subsp. n.

Similar in all essential respects to true *D. nigrifrons*, but the hairs of the whole underside broadly washed with buffy above their slaty bases. Frontal and dorsal markings well-defined. General colour of back as in *nigrifrons* or slightly more buffy.

Dimensions of the type:—

Head and body 70 mm.; tail 75; hind foot 17.

Skull: tip of nasals to back of interparietal 20; palatilar

length 8·6; palatal foramina 4·5; upper molar series 3·1; length of  $m^1$  1·7.

*Hub.* (of type). Chirinda Forest, Melsetter, Rhodesia. Other specimens from Mazøe, Mashonaland (*J. ff. Darling*), and Legogot, Barberton, Transvaal (*Rudd Exploration*).

*Type.* Adult male. B.M. no. 8. 7. 19. 39. Collected and presented by C. F. M. Swynnerton, Esq.

Four specimens of *D. nigrifrons* from S.E. Africa agree in their strongly buffy undersides in contrast with the greyish or only faintly buffy colour found in East-African and Nigerian specimens of *D. nigrifrons*. Heller has distinguished a *D. spectabilis* (locality Lado) from the Kilima-njaro *D. nigrifrons*, because of its "pearl-grey" and not buffy underparts. But all our East-African specimens are more or less greyish below, and the type was said to have the "underparts white, tinged with yellowish brown." No white of any shade occurs on the Rhodesian form.

XXVII.—*On the Occurrence of the Tropical Fowl Mite (Liponyssus bursa, Berlese) in Australia, and a new Instance of its attacking Man.* By STANLEY HIRST.

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IN a little paper entitled "On a widely distributed Gamasid Mite (*Leiognathus morsitans*, sp. n.), parasitic on the Domestic Fowl"\*, I described a blood-sucking mite found on the fowl in several parts of Africa, the Comoro Islands, Mauritius, China, India, the Bahamas, and Columbia. Two instances of this mite attacking Man are given in the paper just mentioned.

Judging from its distribution, I have come to the conclusion that this species is the same as that described by Prof. Antonio Berlese under the name *Leiognathus bursa* from specimens collected at Buenos Aires. Mr. F. W. Urich, Government Entomologist at Trinidad, has recently sent specimens of this mite found on the domestic fowl in that island to the Imperial Bureau of Entomology. The British Museum has just received specimens from Dr. J. Burton Cleland found swarming on a sitting-hen at Sydney, Australia (ii. 1916).

\* Bull. Ent. Res. vi. pp. 55-58, 3 text-figs. (1915).